

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 758

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 3273

FOR INR

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO SOVIET TRIALS

REF: (A) SINGAPORE 3221, (B) STATE 178559,

(C) SINGAPORE 3189

1. TEXT OF JULY 20 EDITORIAL IN MORNING DAILY STRAITS
TIMES FOLLOWS:

"US-SOVIET RELATIONS HAVE TAKEN A PLUNGE FOR THE
WORSE AS A RESULT OF THE TRIALS AND CONVICTION OF
ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY AND ALEXANDER GINZBURG, BOTH
PROMINENT MEMBERS OF AN UNOFFICIAL GROUP FORMED TO
MONITOR RUSSIA'S COMPLIANCE WITH ITS HUMAN RIGHTS
PLEDGES AT HELSINKI. THE TIMING OF THEIR TRIALS AT
A TIME WHEN US SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE AND
HIS SOVIET COUNTERPART ARE MEETING FOR ANOTHER ROUND
OF SALT TALKS--AND THE RUSSIAN DOGGEDNESS IN TRYING
MR. SHCHARANSKY FOR HIGH TREASON HAVE RAISED MANY
QUESTIONS AS TO THE REAL REASONS BEHIND THE RUSSIAN
MOVE, GIVEN MR. BREZHNEV'S OFT-REPEATED PROFESSIONS
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IN DETENTE AND HIS DESIRE FOR CLOSER COOPERATION
WITH THE UNITED STATES. THERE IS NO AGREEMENT
AMONG WESTERN ANALYSTS TRYING TO FATHOM THE SOVIET
DESIGN BUT ONE OBVIOUS MOTIVE, CONSIDERING THE
FACT THAT THE KREMLIN MUST KNOW THAT THE SHCHARANSKY
AND GINZBURG TRIALS WOULD PROVOKE SHARP REACTIONS
IN THE WEST, IS THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS WANT TO

DEMONSTRATE BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND ABROAD THEY WILL NOT BROOK INTERNAL DISSENT OR BE INFLUENCED BY OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. INDEED THE KREMLIN HAS DENOUNCED PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AS RESPONSIBLE FOR LEADING THEIR COUNTRIES ON A CONFRONTATION COURSE.

"THE RUSSIAN DEFIANCE OF WESTERN OPINION, QUITE APART FROM HAVING SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, WILL NO DOUBT REBOUND ON THE SOVIET UNION AS THE 'FREEZING' OF OFFICIAL BRITISH AND AMERICAN VISITS AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S EMBARGO OF THE SALE OF A COMPUTER TO THE SOVIET NEWS AGENCY, TASS, HAVE DEMONSTRATED. IN WESTERN EUROPE THERE ARE ALREADY INCREASING CRIES FOR A CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND SPORTING BOYCOTT OF THE SOVIET UNION. WHETHER US ECONOMIC SANCTIONS WILL BE EFFICACIOUS OR NOT, IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT CARTER CANNOT SIT BACK AND DO NOTHING AFTER STAKING HIS REPUTATION IN THE SHCHARANSKY TRIAL. THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY NO EASY ANSWERS BUT FOR DETENTE TO HAVE REAL MEANING IT IS HOPED THERE WILL BE A CERTAIN LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS BEFORE LONG."

INGRAHAM

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